

of African Americans and of their enduring faith in the American Dream.

As we celebrate National African American History Month, let us resolve to build on this record of success. We must ensure that every American shares equal access to a quality education—an education that will offer the knowledge and skills necessary to fill the jobs of the 21st century. We must strive to eradicate every trace of discrimination from our society and the American workplace. And we must work together—government, private industry, community organizations, and concerned citizens—to invest in all our people, providing them with the tools they need to succeed and widening the circle of opportunity.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim February 1998 as National African American History Month. I call upon public officials, educators, librarians, and all the people of the United States to observe this month with appropriate ceremonies, activities, and programs that raise awareness and appreciation of African American history.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this thirtieth day of January, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-second.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

**Proclamation 7068 of February 26, 1998**

### **Save Your Vision Week, 1998**

*By the President of the United States of America*

#### *A Proclamation*

The ability to see is a great treasure; but, as with any precious possession, it is vulnerable to loss—through injury, age, or disease. Men and women whose jobs require them to work with chemicals or machinery are at increased risk of eye injury. Macular degeneration takes a dramatic toll on the vision of people aged 60 and over, causing severe visual impairment and even blindness in its victims. Diseases such as glaucoma, cataract, and diabetic retinopathy can silently steal the vision of their victims without pain or other early symptoms to signal the need for immediate medical attention.

The greatest defense we have in protecting our eyesight is early detection and treatment. While many Americans receive regular physical examinations to ensure their overall fitness, they often ignore the health of their eyes. Yet, by the time many patients realize their eyesight is deteriorating, it is often too late to restore vision already lost. Even though they may not be experiencing vision problems, Americans should make a dilated eye examination part of their preventive health care routine. A dilated eye exam can reveal early signs of eye disease and make it possible to treat the affliction and preserve vision.

Good eye care is not solely for those who know they are at high risk for eye disease—it is for everyone. Certain types of eye disease tend to develop primarily in children, while others manifest themselves most often in working-age adults or older men and women. By taking good care of our eyes, we can take the important steps to maintain our quality of life and ensure the full enjoyment of all that our world has to offer.

To remind Americans of the importance of protecting their eyesight, the Congress, by joint resolution approved December 30, 1963 (77 Stat. 629; 36 U.S.C. 169a), has authorized and requested the President to proclaim the first week in March of each year as "Save Your Vision Week."

NOW, THEREFORE, I, WILLIAM J. CLINTON, President of the United States of America, do hereby proclaim March 1 through March 7, 1998, as Save Your Vision Week. I urge all Americans to participate by making eye care and eye safety an important part of their lives and to ensure that dilated eye examinations are included in their regular health maintenance programs. I invite eye care professionals, the media, and all public and private organizations dedicated to preserving eyesight to join in activities that will raise awareness of the measures we can take to protect and sustain our vision.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this twenty-sixth day of February, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-eight, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-second.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

**Proclamation 7069 of February 27, 1998**

### **American Red Cross Month, 1998**

*By the President of the United States of America  
A Proclamation*

Americans share a long tradition of compassion for others and lending aid to those in need. Since our earliest days as a Nation, we have been able to bear the heartbreak of family tragedy, personal hardship, or natural disaster because of the help of caring friends and neighbors. For 117 years, the American Red Cross has been the staunchest of friends and neighbors to millions of people both here at home and around the world, adding its own vital contributions to our history of service.

The American Red Cross brings both comfort and practical assistance to the victims of more than 65,000 disasters each year, from hurricanes and tornadoes affecting thousands of people to a house fire involving a single family. Members of the Red Cross also work on the front lines of armed conflicts and disasters across the globe to relieve suffering and restore human dignity and self-sufficiency. At the same time, they serve alongside our men and women in uniform wherever they are deployed, relaying urgent family messages and providing a precious link with home. And through its Holocaust and War Victims Tracing and Information Center, the Red Cross has helped thousands of families in